

## Message Text

PAGE 01 CANBER 04791 292114Z

62

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 /026 W

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R 290839Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1580

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 4791

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SEATO, XC, VC

SUBJ: AUSTRALIAN HESITATION ON INVITATION TO GVN

TO PARTICIPATE IN SEATO COUNCIL MEETING

REF: A. CANBERRA 4771 (NOTAL)

B. BANGKOK 9991

C. SAIGON 15010

D. STATE 169869

1. SUMMARY. STATEMENT IN REF A THAT GOA WOULD PROBABLY HAVE NO TROUBLE WITH INVITATION TO GVN TO PARTICIPATE AS OBSERVER AT SEATO COUNCIL MEETING IN NEW YORK THREATENS TO COME UNSTUCK. ISSUE HAS NOW BEEN REFERRED TO PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM AND WE DO NOT RPT NOT KNOW WHAT OUTCOME WILL BE. DFA TELLS US THERE WAS UNDERSTANDING AFTER SEATO COUNCIL REPS MEETING MAY 31 THAT GVN WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE INVITED AND THAT DEPARTMENT GAVE AUSTRALIANS SIMILAR IMPRESSION. WE SAID WE HAD NO SUCH INFO AND PROVIDED DFA WITH COPIES OF REFS C AND D AS AUTHORITATIVE INDICATION OF DEVELOPMENT OF U.S. POSITION. END SUMMARY.

2. MORNING OF AUGUST 29 BLAKENEY (FIRST ASSISTANT SECRETARY, DEFENSE DIVISION, DFA) CALLED ME TO SAY THAT DESPITE ASSURANCE GIVEN ME BY SHANN AUG. 28 (REF A), U.S. SHOULD NOT RPT NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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TAKE IT FOR GRANTED THAT GOA WILL GO ALONG WITH U.S. INTENTION TO INVITE GVN TO PARTICIPATE IN SEATO COUNCIL MEETING AS OBSERVER.

3. BLAKENEY SAID THAT AT SEATO COUNCIL REPS MEETING ON

MAY 31 GOA WAS LET TO UNDERSTAND BY AMEMBASSY BANGKOK THAT GVN WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE INVITED TO ATTEND COUNCIL MEETING THIS YEAR. ABOUT MAY 29, BLAKENEY CONTINUED, GOA HAD GATHERED FROM SECGEN'S STAFF THAT GVN WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE INVITED. I RESPONDED I HOPED VERY MUCH THAT ISSUE WOULD NOT COME UP. IF WE TAKE FURTHER STEP OF EXCLUDING FVN OBSERVER AFTER ALL THE OTHER THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN HAPPENING TO THE GVN, IT COULD PROVE DEMORALIZING. I NOTED THAT OBSERVER IS NOT FULL MEMBER AND SEATO COUNCIL MEETING IS KIND OF THING UNLIKELY TO ATTRACT PRESS ATTENTION. I CONCLUDED I WOULD LOOK UP BACKGROUND TO INVITATION AND WOULD BE BACK IN TOUCH WITH BLAKENEY, WHO SAID HE WOULD WELCOME OUR FURTHER VIEWS ON MATTER.

4. EMBOFF SUBSEQUENTLY REVIEWED STATUS OF GVN INVITATION WITH BLAKENEY LATER ON AUG. 29. HE TOLD BLAKENEY OUR RECORDS IN CANBERRA ONLY REFLECT PART OF PICTURE, BUT (RELYING ON REF B, WHICH SAYS NOTHING WHATEVER ON GVN INVITATION) WE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE GVN INVITATION HAD BEEN DISCUSSED MAY 31. BLAKENEY SAID THAT NOT ONLY HAD AMEMBASSY BANGKOK INDICATED THAT GVN WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE INVITED TO SEATO COUNCIL, BUT PARALLEL AUSTRALIAN INQUIRIES AT DEPT. OF STATE IN WASHINGTON HAD BROUGHT OUT SIMILAR VIEW. EMBOFF POINTED OUT THAT DEPT. IS LARGE ORGANIZATION, AND SUCH EXPRESSION OF VIEWS MAY NOT RPT NOT HAVE BEEN AUTHORITATIVE. BLAKENEY SEEMED VERY SURE OF HIMSELF BUT WAS OBVIOUSLY RELUCTANT TO NAME OFFICER IN DEPT. WHO HAD INDICATED GVN WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE INVITED, AND EMBOFF DID NOT PRESS POINT. EMBOFF PROVIDED BLAKENEY WITH COPY OF REF. C AND REF D AS AUTHORITATIVE INDICATION OF DEVELOPMENT OF U.S. POSITION ON GVN INVITATION. BLAKENEY THANKED EMBOFF FOR ADDITIONAL MATERIAL PROVIDED.

5. COMMENT: WHOLE ISSUE OF AUSTRALIAN POSITION ON GVN INVITATION TO SEATO COUNCIL NOW GOING FORWARD TO WHITLAM. IT MUST SWIM AGAINST TIDE OF WHOLE RANGE OF ISSUES GOING TO PRIME MINISTER, AND WE DO NOT RPT NOT KNOW WHEN DECISION WILL BE REACHED. CONCEIVABLY, SHANN MAY HAVE BEEN RIGHT IN SAYING HE THOUGHT AUSTRALIA WOULD HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH INVITATION. BLAKENEY CLEARLY DOES NOT RPT NOT THINK SO. I AS WELL AS EMBOFF REPEATED AND ELABORATED TO  
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BLAKENEY ARGUMENTS IN REF D. YOU MAY WISH TO REINFORCE POSITION WITH AMBASSADOR PLIMSOLL.  
GREEN

CONFIDENTIAL

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PINT, PFOR, XC, VC  
**To:** STATE INFO BANGKOK  
SAIGON  
WELLINGTON  
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